

*Notes on the History of Orissa under the Mahommedan, Marátha, and English rule.*—By JOHN BEAMES, B. C. S.

[These notes were written as Chapter II of a manual of the district of Balasore, of which I was Collector from 1869 to 1873. The work when completed was laid before Sir R. Temple (then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal) in 1875; but for certain reasons which cannot be here stated, was not printed. In 1877 I was asked by Mr. Blochmann, then Secretary to the Society, to allow him to print the historical portion in the Society's Journal. I was unable to comply with his request at that time, and the work was put aside. Recently being engaged in some researches regarding the history of my present official charge, the Burdwan Division, I have had occasion to refer to it, and as I do not know of any compilation which gives all the facts therein contained, I have thought that it may be useful to print it.]

There is some reason for believing that for many centuries the country between the Kansbans and the Subanrekha was totally uninhabited, and covered with jungle. The legends of the Oriya race render it probable that they came into the province through the hills and down the Mahanadi, and the characteristics of their language lead me to believe that they broke off from the main stream of Aryan immigration somewhere about Shahabad and Gya. That they are not an offshoot of the Bengalis is proved by the fact that their language was already formed as we now have it, at a period when Bengali had not yet attained a separate existence, and when the deltaic portion of Bengal was still almost uninhabited. So that in fact they could not have sprung from the Bengalis, simply because there were then no Bengalis to spring from.

Numerous as are the allusions in early Oriya history to the north-western and western parts of India, and frequent as were their expeditions to the south, it is remarkable that there is nowhere in all their annals more than an obscure occasional mention of Bengal, and then even as a far-off inaccessible place. The similarity between the languages is not by any means so great as some Bengali writers have sought to make out, and what similarity there is, is due to the fact that they are both dialects of the eastern or Mágadhi form of Prákrit.

The ancient sovereigns of Orissa were great builders and employed stone in their works. As the province is not deltaic, but high and rocky, these stone buildings would last for ages, and in fact central and southern Orissa are full of them. Now it is a remarkable fact that in all northern Balasore from the Kansbans to the frontier of Bengal there is not a vestige of a single fort, temple, palace or bridge that can be traced or attributed to any older period than the sixteenth century. It is hardly possible that if this part of the country had been inhabited, the kings and rich men who so lavishly spent their wealth in the rest of the province on temples and

forts, should not have erected a single stone building in a place where stone abounds.

An additional argument for my view is derived from the existence of numerous tenures of a kind originally granted for the purpose of clearing and settling forest land. These tenures, so numerous in northern Balasore, are hardly known south of the Kansbans except in the hills.

I may also point to the very large number of villages whose names begin with the word "Ban" = forest, including according to one derivation Balasore itself, (*i. e.*, Baneshwara, forest-lord,\* Sauskrit Vaneśwara) and to the very marked prevalence of the Kole or aboriginal type among the lower classes.

Stirling's account of Orissa has been long in print, and is so well known, that it would be superfluous to repeat what is there said about the various dynasties of Orissa. It will have struck many readers of that work that often as the towns and regions of the Cuttack and Pooree districts are mentioned in the historical portion, Balasore is hardly ever spoken of. One would not of course expect to find it mentioned under the name of Balasore, because Balasore as a town is a creation of the English and quite a modern place, but no other towns, villages, or parganas in this part of the province are ever mentioned. Till the arrival of the Musalmans, no event in Oriya history took place there, nor is there any evidence of its having been more than scantily peopled, if at all.

It will not therefore take long to put together the scattered notices that exist during the Hindu and Muhammadan periods. From the people themselves not much can be got, the best informed of them cannot, with few exceptions, go back further than the sanads granted to their ancestors by the provincial governors under Aurangzeb or at furthest Shah Jehan, and the majority do not as a rule know who their own great-grand-fathers were, and do not care.

The first of the few notices of any part of this district occurs† in a speech made by Raja Anang Bhim Deo who ruled in Orissa A. D. 1175—1202, in which he informs his courtiers that the kings who had preceded him had ruled from the Kansbans in the north to the Rasikoilah in the south, but that he had extended his sway to the Datai Borhi river on the north. I cannot find what river is meant, but I presume it to be the Subanrekha, which in some parts of its course is still called Dantai. The statement that the whole country from the Ganges to the Godavery was

\* [The little village of Balasore which afterwards, under English influence, grew into the present town, is called from a temple to Mahadeva Vaneshwara or "Shiva the forest lord," probably because the place where his temple stood was covered by dense jungles.]

† Stirling's Orissa. p. 109.

under this king's rule is clearly fabulous, and arises from the fact that the Godavery is called by Oriyas the "Sán Ganga" or little Ganges, so that it became a natural phrase in native adulatory language to say a king reigned from the great to the little Ganges. The area of this tract is said to have been measured at 124 million bighas, which is unintelligible, even with the small bighas of those days.

In 1450 we are briefly told that the Mughals came into the country, but it is not said from what quarter, and a prior invasion in 1243 is evidently a mistake.\* The expedition was really to Jajnapur in Bengal, a place whose name has been confounded with Jajpore in Orissa. In 1457 we find the Muhammadans attacking Orissa from the south in conjunction with the Telingas, and the invasion of 1450 was probably from the same quarter. The Bhunyans of Garpadda, 15 miles north of Balasore, have in their possession a copper-plate grant of the estate which they still hold, made to their ancestor Potesar Bhatt by the Raja Pursotam Deb in 1503. The amount of land granted, 1,408 batis (= 28,160 acres), is so large that it is evident land was not of much value in northern Orissa in those days.

The road to Orissa must, however, have been practicable in 1516, for in that year, as we know from his life in Bengali, the great reformer Chaitanya travelled from Nadiya to Puri and took up his abode there for the rest of his days. Probably the district began to be cleared and settled about this time under the "Purshethi" system. Still we have no detailed accounts of it. About this time the Afghans from Bengal, however, marched right down to Cuttack itself, and the road which they made or used on this and their subsequent expeditions is still to be traced, and is known to the villagers as the "Pathán sarak." It runs parallel to the present Cuttack Trunk Road but nearer to the hills, and apparently from superstitious motives is left uncultivated to this day.

In 1550 Mukund Deo the last indigenous king of Orissa ascended the throne, and we are told of him that his sway extended to Tribeni Ghat on the Hugli. He it was in all probability who erected the strong chain of forts still standing at Raibanian in the extreme northern corner of the district, just opposite the place where the old Pathán road crosses the Subanrekha. In 1568 this fort was taken by the terrible Kálá Pahár, general of the Afghan forces who overran all Orissa, defeated and deposed Mukund and obtained possession of the whole province.†

\* See Blochmann in J. A. S. B. Vol. XIII, p. 237.

† There is some controversy about this date. Dr. Hunter (*Orissa*, Vol. II, p. 10,) gives a note founded on materials supplied by my friend, the late Mr. Blochmann, from which he derives the conclusion that the date 1568 given by the Muhammadan historian is correct. This view has received signal confirmation from a discovery of my

Balasore now begins to be more important. The road to Bengal was open and the Muhammadan forces passed and repassed and fought many battles along it.

Before entering into the somewhat interesting details of the Musalman invasion, settlement and government of Orissa, it will be advisable to state briefly the general position of India.

Akbar ascended the throne in A. D. 1556, and though very young, soon commenced to consolidate his power. But in all parts of India there were Hindu Rájás who had either themselves wielded independent power, or whose immediate ancestors had done so. There were also numerous bands of Mughals and Afghans who, during the unsettled reigns of Akbar's predecessors, had penetrated into various distant parts of India in search of plunder, or with a view to carving out principalities for themselves by the sword. All these classes were only with extreme difficulty and after repeated chastisements reduced to obedience, and the history of Akbar's reign is chiefly occupied, as are those of his son and grandson, with the accounts of expeditions directed against refractory vassals.

Of the latter kind were the Afghan adventurers who so long held Orissa. In 1567 Sulayman Shah Kirani was viceroy of Bengal; he was in fact king in all but name. He it was who sent Kálá Pahár into Orissa; the accounts of the histories differ widely as to the date as well as the progress of this invasion. From local legends it would appear that Mukund Deo, after vainly endeavouring to hold the fort of Raibanian, retreated southwards fighting as he went, and was killed at Jájpúr. As Kálá Pahár was an ultra-fanatical Musalman, in the estimation of himself

own. At Srijanga, a village ten miles south of Balasore, I found on the edge of a large tank called the "Aehyuta Ságar" an upright stone covered with an inscription. This stone I removed and set up in the compound of my house at Balasore, where it now is. The inscription, as partly decyphered by myself and several Pandits, yields the following results: The tank was dug by a Khandait who describes himself as "Aehyut Baliar Singh son of Daitari Biswal, sole ruler in this region"; and he says he erected it when Man Singh, general of Akbar Padshah was in Orissa, in the 4699th year of the Kali Yug, in the 1520th year of the Saka era, in the 30th year of the "Yavan bhog" or Musalman invasion, and in the 37th *anka* or year of the reign of Ram Chandra Dev, first Sudra king of Orissa. Now both the Yug and the Saka years agree in corresponding with A. D. 1598. Consequently if 1598 be the 30th year of Musalman invasion, the first year of that period must be 1568 as Abul Fazl reckons, and not 1558 as Stirling, following the Oriya annalists, puts it. The 37th *anka* would be the 28th year of Ram Chandra's reign, because in reckoning the *anka*, the first two years and every year that has a 6 or a 0 in it are omitted, we must thus omit the years 1, 2, 6, 10, 16, 20, 26 and 30. This takes us back to 1570 as the year of Ram Chandra's accession, which leaves 1569 to represent the period of anarchy when there was no king, according to the native annalists. This discovery of the Srijanga stone is thus valuable as elucidating a disputed date in history.

and his followers any one of them who was slain in battle with the Hindús was entitled to be considered a martyr. Accordingly we find there must have been a battle at Garhpada, for there lies buried one of Kálá Pahár's officers with the title of Shahid or "martyr." His name was Hitam Khán, and a grant of rentfree land of 138 bighas is enjoyed by the Garhpada Bhuyans on condition of keeping up his shrine. At Bastah lies another, Sháh Husayni Shahid, at Ramchandarpur south of Garhpadda is a third Muhammad Khán Shahid, and at Remnah a fourth Gulab Sháh Shahid, from whom also the large bazar of Shahji Patna takes its name. We can thus trace Kálá Pahár all through the district by the tombs of his slain Captains. He left a number of his turbulent followers in Orissa and returned to Bengal where he was killed in battle. A great number of these lawless adventurers settled at Kasba, a suburb of Balasore, and at Bhadrakh and Dhámngar, where their descendants are still to be found.

In 1574 Daúd Khán, the king of Bengal, being driven out of that province by the forces of the Emperor Akbar under Munim Khán, fled to Orissa and remained hovering backwards and forwards between Cuttack and Jellasore for some time. At last Munim Khán with a large force, accompanied by the celebrated Raja Todar Mal marched down through Midnapore on him. The armies met on the north bank of the Subanrekha near the village of Tukaroi and the battle took place on the 3rd March 1575.\* Munim Khán was victorious and Dáud fled to Bhadrakh. The place where the battle was fought is well known to the villagers and is still called Mughalmáí (the Mughal's slaughter). It runs westward for some six miles from the present Jellasore dak bungalow towards the river. Todar Mal pursued Dáud to Bhadrakh, but Dáud did not wait to be caught. He fled to Cuttack and got into the fort there and garrisoned it strongly. The Imperial forces, however, attacked and took it, and Dáud then submitted to the Emperor. Munim Khán returned to Bengal, where he and many of his officers died of fever said to have been contracted in Orissa, but more probably due to their own imprudence in taking up their residence in the pestilential jungles of Gaur.

After the submission of Dáud he was left in possession of central Orissa as far north as the Baitarani, but the territory now comprised in the Balasore district was annexed to the Subah of Bengal,† and two Thana-

\* See Blochmann, *Aín*, Vol. I, p. 375.

† In the *Aín Akbari* it is indeed asserted that the whole of Orissa was on this occasion subjugated and added to the Subah of Bengal. It is described as divided into Sirkars like other Subahs. Sirkar Jalesar (Jellasore) includes the greater part of the present district of Midnapore. The other Sirkars are Bhadrak, Kaṭak (Cuttack), Kalinga Dandpát, and Raj Mahindrah (Rajamundry), but no details are given of the two last, and it is well known that they were not subject to the Empire. (*Aín Akbari* by Blochmann, Persian text, Vol. II, p. 209).

dars were appointed, one at Jellasore, the other at Bhadrakh. Balasore itself was not a place of importance in those days. After the death of Munim Khán the reins of authority became relaxed, and Dáud came up into Balasore and marched into Bengal. The Afgháns of Orissa were for many years in a characteristically Afghán state of riot and quarrelling, and Balasore, lying as it does between Cuttack and the Bengal frontier, was often the battle-field between the rulers of the two provinces. None of the battles were, however, very decisive, nor are there any traces of the battle-fields still remaining, though many villages and market places with Musalman names in various parts of the district testify to the settlement of Afghán and Mughal invaders.

In 1582 Kutlú Khán, the Afghán leader, who since Daud's death had been the virtual ruler of Orissa, marched through Balasore against the Subahdár of Bengal, and advanced as far as Burdwan, where in 1583 he was defeated by Sadik Khán. At that time the sway of the Afgháns of Orissa extended with a few exceptions as far as the Rúpnaráyan river, but after this victory they were beaten back, and retreated to Cuttack, leaving Balasore as far as the Baitarani river for a time unmolested.

Kutlú Khán died in 1590, and his sons being minors sued for peace and agreed to surrender the temple of Jaganáth and the sacred domain or "khetra" to the Emperor. The Governor of Bengal at this time was Rája Man Singh, who as a Hindú was highly pleased at rescuing the holy city from the hands of the infidels who had long exercised a cruel and tyrannous sway over the priests.

Two years later, however, the treacherous Afgháns again seized Jaganáth and this roused Mán Singh's wrath, and in a great battle fought in 1592 on the northern bank of the Subanrekha, probably on the same site as Munim Khán's victory at Tukaroi or Mughalmari, he utterly crushed the Afgháns and took possession once more of Orissa. The rebels were turned out of Jellasore and fled to Cuttack where they shut themselves up in the strong fort of Sarang Garh, three miles south of the city. Mán Singh soon after besieged and took Sarang Garh, and received the submission of the Afgháns.

Sultán Khusrau, grandson of Akbar and son of Jahangir was named Viceroy of Orissa, but he never visited the province, his appointment being probably merely honorary.

Mán Singh having gone to Agra to pay his respects to the Emperor, the Afgháns under 'Usman Khán again rose in 1598 and collected a large force at Bhadrakh, where they defeated the Imperial troops under Maha Singh, occupied a great portion of western Bengal, and again obtained possession of Balasore as far as the Subanrekha. Mán Singh, however, again returned and defeated 'Usman at Sherpur 'Atai north of Burdwan.

'Usman as usual retired to Cuttaek, where he was not pursued. In all these constant advances and retreats, the Afgháns seem always to have regarded Bhadrakh as their frontier. Jellasore was the frontier of the Imperialists, and the intermediate country was a debateable ground over which both parties fought at their pleasure. I mention this fact as confirming what I have said on a previous page, that central and northern Balasore even down to so late a period as this, contained no towns of importance but was scantily peopled and not worth fighting for.

For eleven years 'Usman Khán ruled at Cuttaek, but does not seem to have exercised much sway over Balasore, as he never during that time came into collision with the Imperial garrison at Jellasore, which he could not have failed to have done had he ventured so far north. In 1611, however, he appears to have begun aggressions once more, and encamped on the banks of the Subanrekha again with an army of 20,000 horse and defied the Emperor's forces. After a fierce encounter which from the accounts given by the native historians appears to have taken place among the marshes near Rájghat on the southern side of the river, 'Usman was shot in the head and died. His troops fled in disorder and Shujáat Khán, the leader of the Mughals, entered the province as a conqueror and annexed it finally to the Empire.

Orissa now enjoyed peace for five years under the able government of Ibrahím Khán, and it is from this epoch that we date the rise of Balasore as a commercial town. The district produces rice in abundance, and when the Afgháns ceased to desolate it, it rapidly recovered and began to export. The weavers of Balasore whose cloths were long so celebrated now begin to be heard of, and it was not many years later than this date that the English established themselves as traders in the district.

In 1621 Prince Khurram son of the Emperor Jehangir (subsequently Emperor under the title of Sháh Jahán) invaded Orissa through the hills, turned out Ahmad Beg, the governor of the province, and after appointing Kuli Khán in his place pushed on through Balasore into Bengal. He does not seem to have stayed long in Orissa, though his rebellion lasted a long time in Bengal and Behar. Orissa does not appear to have suffered in any way from the change of governors, nor is there anything further to be gleaned from the Persian historians save a string of successive governors. We learn incidentally that the cultivation of the soil was increasing and was further promoted by the grant of many military jagirs to old soldiers of the Empire. One of these jagirs was established at Dhamnagar where the descendants of the original grantees still live, and a populous Musalman colony has sprung up. It was during this period as will be seen hereafter that the English obtained from the Emperor Sháh Jahán a firman empowering them to open factories at Pipli and Balasore.

In the time of Mir Taki Khán, who was Naib of Shujauddin, Nawab of Bengal, all that part of the Sirkar of Jellasore lying north of the Subanrekha was transferred to Bengal, thus making that river the northern boundary of Orissa. It is much to be wished that this well defined boundary had been adhered to ever since. Taki Khán ruled Orissa from 1725 to 1734. He was a bigotted Musalman, and in his time the Rája of Khurda found or affected to find it necessary to carry off the idol of Jaganáth to the hills beyond the Chilka. All pilgrimage was in consequence put a stop to, and the revenues of the province greatly injured. Taki Khán lies buried in the Kadam Rasúl at Cuttack, but the local traditions of Balasore represent him as having spent much of his time in that town. He built the masonry tank, and reservoir and the mosque and gardens known as the Kadam Rasul in Balasore.\* He is also said to have had a hunting palace at Remna five miles from Balasore under the Nilgiri Hills, a place still abounding with game, and whose name (Sanskrit Rama-*na*=a place of sport, or hunting-ground) supports the legend. There are still at Remna extensive ruins of Muhammadan tombs and buildings. Taki Khán is well remembered in Balasore, and his character for piety stands high. A curious legend is current that the Vaishnava, Nandhá Gosain, whose temple is in Malikáspur a suburb of the town, was in the habit of making a great noise with drums and cymbals while celebrating his kir-tans or religious ceremonies. The Nawab's devotions being disturbed by this noise, he ordered it to be stopped. That evening when the naubat, or beating of drums at sunset was about to take place, none of the drums would sound, and this state of things continued till the Nawab withdrew his prohibition from Nandha Gosain, when the drums again sounded as usual.

In 1734 Murshid Kuli Khán was appointed governor of Orissa, and with him came as his Dewan the infamous Mir Habib who afterwards betrayed the province to the Marathas. The first thing Murshid did was to induce the Bráhmans to bring back to Puri the idol of Jagannáth which had been carried off for safety to the hills across the Chilka. By this step the revenues of the province were at once immensely increased, as the stream of pilgrims, which had for some time ceased owing to the disappearance of the object of their worship, now set in again, and the tax on them is said to have risen from a nominal sum to nine lakhs per annum. In 1740 Ali Verdi Khán became Governor of Bengal and made himself virtually independant of the Emperor, whose power had been much shaken

\* Probably so named in imitation of that in Cuttack, which derives its name "footstep of the Prophet" from being supposed to contain some relics of Muhammad brought from Mecca.



by the invasion of Nadir Sháh and the sack of Delhi. The Governor of Orissa refused to obey Ali Verdi, and the latter marched against him. The two armies met at Balasore and the native account is so precise that I am able to identify the exact spot where the battle took place. It is about a mile north of the Civil Station where a long ridge of high land, then clothed with woods, slopes down into the marshes between the Nuniajori and the Burhabalang rivers near the villages of Haripur and Dohopara.\* The river surrounds this land on three sides, and in so strong a position Murshid might long have defied his adversary, who being cut off from the town could get no provisions and was in much distress. Murshid's son-in-law, however, rashly moved out to attack the Nawab, and the result was a complete victory for the latter. Murshid and his party got on board a ship at Balasore and fled by sea to Masulipatam. The Raja of Rattampur with much promptness carried off Murshid's women and children from Cuttack and delivered them to him in the south before Ali Verdi could come up.

Sayid Ahmad, the Nawab's nephew, was made Governor, and rendered himself very unpopular by his tyranny. At last the people of Cuttack rose against him and recalled Murshid Kuli. He would not come himself, but sent his son-in-law Bakir Khan, who was, however, conquered again on the banks of the Mahanadi in 1741 by Ali Verdi, who appointed Masum Khán Governor of Orissa. He thinking all danger now at an end, disbanded his troops who mostly returned to their own homes, and contented himself with an escort of five thousand horse and some infantry recruited in the province. In this defenceless state was Orissa, when a great calamity occurred which entirely changed the whole current of its history, and introduced the darkest and bitterest period of suffering that the harrassed and wasted province has ever known.

‡In the month of February 1743 (Phalgun 1150) the Marathas‡ from Berar entered the province of Orissa. After the defeat of Murshid Kuli Khán by Ali Verdi Khán at Balasore in 1740, the traitor Mir Habibullah, dewan of the former, had secretly invited the Marathas to attack

\* To the traveller approaching Balasore from the north through the centre of Murshid's position along the Calcutta Trunk Road the suitability of this particular spot for a camp of defence is very strikingly apparent. Balasore town and station lie along this high ridge with the swampy Nuniajori winding at its foot and the river just beyond.

† The historical details here given are derived principally from Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*; the minor and local details from native tradition and the records of the Balasore office.

‡ I write this word as the natives themselves do मराठा Maráthá, the common spelling Mahratta is incorrect.

Orissa. At this time Raghoji Bhonsla was ruler of Berar holding his court at Nagpur. Habib's negotiations were made in the first instance with Bhaskar Pandit or Pant (as the Marathas corrupt the word) Dewan of Raghoji. With his master's permission Bhaskar Pant made an attack upon Behar in the first instance with twelve thousand horse and got as far as Pachet, before Ali Verdi could get up from Orissa to oppose him. A battle was fought at Katwa in which the Marathas were victorious, and Mir Habib having been (probably on purpose) taken prisoner, at once installed himself as Bhaskar's adviser, and enabled him to take possession of the town of Hugli, and subsequently to overrun the country as far as Midnapore. Ali Verdi, however, was not discouraged, he again attacked the Marathas and drove them through Midnapore, skirmishing as they retreated as far as Balasore. Here they made a stand, and a battle took place on the high land now occupied by the Civil station of Balasore, a little to the south of the camp of Murshid Kuli mentioned in a preceding paragraph. The result of the battle was unfavourable to the Marathas, for they retreated on Cuttack, taking the opportunity, however, of plundering everything they could lay hands on as they went. From Cuttack they retreated through the hills to Berar.

Immediately on their return to Nagpore, Raghoji Bhonsla himself resolved to make an attack on Bengal and marched at once. He arrived at a place between Katwa and Bardwan, but the Maratha Peshwa Balaji Rao having been incited by the Emperor of Delhi to restrain his turbulent feudatory, had marched through Allahabad, Patna and Bhagalpur, effected a junction with Ali Verdi Khán at Murshidabad and bore down on Raghoji. The latter having no mind to come to open blows with the Minister of his nominal sovereign, retreated but was overtaken and defeated, after which with the remnant of his forces he marched again through Balasore, plundering and destroying as he went, back to Berar.

Into the confused history of Maratha politics in those days it is not necessary to enter. Suffice it to say that Raghoji Bhonsla was, next to the Peshwa, the most powerful Maratha noble of the time, and shortly after his return to his capital he marched on Sattara, and extorted from the puppet Rájá a deed by which, while the rest of the countries under Maratha rule, or rather misrule, were retained by the Peshwa, to Raghoji himself were assigned the revenues of Oudh, Behar, Bengal and Orissa. The Rájá was possibly giving away a good deal more than he possessed, but that did not much matter, Raghoji's horsemen, with their long spears, might be trusted to settle the rest.

In the cold weather of 1744 Raghoji sent an army of 20,000 horse into Orissa apparently by way of Sambhalpur. Ali Verdi met them in

Midnapore and being unable to cope with them in the field proposed negotiations. He invited to an entertainment Bhaskar Pant, Ali Karawal and the principal officers, and there murdered them. The army retreated in confusion through Balasore and were much harassed by the peasantry who maintained a guerrilla warfare and cut off all stragglers without mercy.\*

In 1745 Raghoji took his revenge. Marching down upon Cuttack in November, he overran the country probably as far as the Subanrekha, and refused to leave unless he was paid three krores of rupees. He then advanced to Katwa, but the indomitable Ali Verdi met him there and defeated him, on which he returned to Berar without his money, but plundering as usual on the way.

Raghoji was now, fortunately for Balasore and Orissa, engaged in wars and intrigues on his own side of the country for some time. In the immediately succeeding years he appears to have left Orissa pretty much to itself, though stray bands of Marathas made their appearance from time to time in 1748 and 1749; but in 1750 Janoji Bhonsla, son of old Raghoji, was sent into Orissa with Mir Habib and the two commenced their old system of plunder and extortion. In 1750 Ali Verdi lost all hope of resisting the marauders and gave up to them the whole province south of the Subanrekha as well as the Pargana of Pattáspur north of that river. The Marathas were to hold the province as security for the *chauth* or tribute always claimed by them from conquered provinces.

Stirling speaks of a second invasion which occurred in 1753, but this seems doubtful. At any rate it could not have been led by Janoji, for Raghoji died in that year, and Janoji was busy in securing his succession to the hereditary office of Sena Sahib or Commander-in-Chief and was at Puna for that purpose during the greater part of the year.

In the year 1751, during Janoji's occupation of Orissa, the traitor Habib met his deserts. Janoji charged him with embezzlement and made him prisoner in his camp at Garhpada, a large and important village on the borders of Moharbhanj, 15 miles north of Balasore, and still the seat of a respectable family of zemindars. Habib was indignant at being confined, and with a few followers tried to escape, and the guards placed over him hacked him to pieces. The place, where his camp was pitched, is still known as Habibganj. It is a small bazar and village in Pargana Garhpada.

There is nothing further at this period specially relating to Balasore. In 1755 the whole province was finally and conclusively made

\* One is glad to see the Oriya peasantry showing some little spirit on this occasion. It would have been better for them had they done so oftener.

over to the Marathas at the request of the zemindars of Midnapore and Burdwan in exchange for 4 lakhs of the "chauth", the remainder to be paid from Bengal. Janoji's attention was engrossed by more exciting events in his own country, and he contented himself with getting as much money as he could out of the province and leaving it to be governed by his officers as they chose. The northern limit of Orissa was at this time not as is generally stated at the Subanrekha, but included Pataspur and Bhograi.

The oppression of the Marathas has often been written about. To this day the peasant's name for anarchy and oppression is "Maratha Amal." Janoji Bhonsla died in 1773, and was succeeded by his brother Sabaji, who ruled till 1775, when he was slain in battle by Madhoji his brother, who succeeded him as regent for his own son Raghoji II who had been adopted by Janoji and named his successor.

Before continuing the history of Balasore under the Marathas it will be interesting to collect the scattered notices of their presence in Orissa as it affected the then growing power of the English. Our countrymen as will be stated more in detail in the next section, had for more than a century been in possession of factories and trading-posts in Orissa.\* The chief of these were at Balasore and Pipli on the Subanrekha of which more hereafter. The first entry in the Government records is dated 25th February 1748, and records the alarm caused by the Marathas, then encamped at Katwa in Burdwan and threatening Murshidabad. On the same date Mr. Kelsall, Resident at Balasore, suggests the sending of the post by mounted postmen as faster than runners. The Marathas were in great force in the Santhal Pergunnahs and all over lower Bengal, and took a fort on the site of the present Botanical Gardens. The Nawab sends a hint to the English to the effect that they should drive away these marauders who had plundered the Company's fleet of boats laden with silk from Casimbazar.

In August of the same year, Mr. Kelsall again writes from Balasore that the "Morattoes Horse" had attacked the factory of Balramgarhi at the mouth of the Balasore river, but had been repulsed by the Nawab who had pursued them into Cuttack.

In May 1749 the Nawab was at Cuttack, the Marathas had fled, but were expected to return the next year, which, as we have seen, they did under Janoji. There were still, however, parties of them hanging about Diamond Harbour and the lower reaches of the river. They seem to have given the English a wide berth, though the timid Bengalis could make no

\* Selections from the records of the Government of India, by Rev. J. Long 1748 to 1767.

stand against them. The Marathas were not blood-thirsty, their object was plunder, but of that they were insatiable. Too contemptuous of the Oriyas to take any great precautions, they seem to have wandered about in small bands stripping the country bare as they went.

In 1750 with Janoji's return matters grew worse and we find Mr. Kelsall reporting that, owing to the disturbances in the country, he could not "purchase any ready money goods, as the weavers or greater part of them have been obliged to abscond."

Stirling would appear to be correct as to an invasion in 1753, (though I do not think Janoji himself could have been with it), for the Resident at Balasore writes from Balramgarhi on 1st February of that year in a very desponding tone—"Weavers at Balasore complain of the great scarcity of rice and provisions of all kinds occasioned by the devastation of the Mahrattas, who, 600 in number, after plundering Balasore had gone to the Nelligreen (Nilgiri?) hills; several weavers have brought their looms into the factory, and the few who remain declare they shall be obliged to quit the place. Desires he will send him 1500 or 2000 maunds of rice on the Honorable Company's account."

The residency at Cuttack does not seem to have been established till 1757, nearly a hundred years later than Balasore; for there is a letter dated 24th July of that year from Mr. John Bristow urging that he be allowed to hoist the Company's flag there. Again in 1759 Mr. Gray is directed to stay at Cuttack as long as he can with safety to himself, to keep the Government informed of the proceedings of the "Morattoes."

Even so late as 1760 the English do not seem to have contemplated that the Marathas would permanently retain Orissa, though one would have thought that they must have heard of the treaty in 1755, in spite of which "Mr. John Burdett at Balasore requests to be allowed to keep the spies allowed for that Factory, while the Marathas remain in the country, otherwise it will be impossible for him to acquaint us with their motions." (March 27.)

It appears in fact that the Marathas were bad neighbours, and not careful to confine themselves within their treaty boundaries. Long after 1755 the Burdwan Rájá collected and kept up troops from fear of them and "Gawsib Singh the Jellasore zamadar, a man of great valour" was sent into Midnapore to protect the ryots. Pattaspore being in the hands of the Marathas, Jellasore must have been a very exposed position, a long narrow strip in fact of the Nawab's territory stretching far down into the country held by the Marathas, and consequently exposed to inroads from them. The collection of troops by the Bardwan Rájá was probably simply a feint and was seen through, and he was ordered to disband them. Sheo Bhat Sántra was the first Maratha Subadar of Orissa,

and he it is who is alluded to in the Proceedings of 25th February 1760 as “Shubuts having entered this Province with a party of Marathas and commenced hostilities against us.” The people of Balasore have no distinctly historical facts to relate of this period; all they know is, that bands of “Bargis,” as the Maratha horse were called, were always wandering about the country, fighting and plundering under pretext of collecting revenue. The zamindars and khandaits were turbulent and refractory, and it is astonishing how little influence the Marathas seem to have had over them.

In 1761 we hear of the troops of “Shah Bhut” coalescing with the Rájas of Birbhum and Bardwan, and subsequently returning to Balasore by way of Midnapore. It appears from Proceedings of September 17, 1761 that Sheo Bhat considered himself entitled to take possession of Midnapore, and to ravage Bengal whenever he did not get his chauth, and the English therefore resolve on that date to “set on foot an expedition against Cuttack,” the Nawab to pay the cost by an assignment on the revenues of Jellasore and Cuttack. The omission of all mention of Balasore shews that it had still no importance in the Revenue Department. The old division into the Sirkars of Jellasore, Bhádrakh, and Cuttack was evidently still in force. Sheo Bhat had at this time forcibly annexed the chauth of Midnapore to that of Cuttack and was deaf to the Nawab’s remonstrances. Mr. Johnstone the Company’s Resident at Midnapore was besieged in “Midnapore house” 14 days by Sheo Bhat at the head of a large force, and made a gallant defence. This roused the Calcutta Committee and they suggested to the Nawab that the war should be carried into the enemies’ country by an expedition to Cuttack, which would have the effect of securing to him “the total ancient possessions of the Soobahs of Bengal” and be “a considerable addition to his revenues and a firm barrier against future incursions of the Marathas.” They wrote at the same time to the Bombay Committee urging them to make a simultaneous attack on the Marathas from their side.

Nothing, however, came of this, owing to the Nawab’s unwillingness to act. In 1763 there is a letter from the Governor at Balasore to one “Moonshee Gholam Mustapha” directing him to warn Sheo Bhat that in case of his continuing to oppress the ryots “the army that is just arrived from Madras” would be sent against him, and the town of Cuttack taken from him. In 1764 Sheo Bhat was turned out, and Bhawani Pandit appointed in his place. On the 5th October the latter writes a threatening letter stating that the former Nawab’s negotiations concerning the chauth were never brought to an issue without the approach of an army. Unfortunately the extracts in Mr. Long’s book are arranged chronologically, so that we never get the full thread of any one series

of transactions. I cannot say therefore what was the result of this letter, but as the English on their part had their hands full at this time with their quarrel with the Nawab, their inaction is perhaps sufficiently accounted for.

There is, however, great dearth of information about the internal affairs of Balasore at this time. On 4th December comes another letter from Bhawani Pandit stating that two years before the zamindars of Moharbhaj and Nilgiri had plundered the inhabitants of some parts of Balasore and entered into a confederacy with Bháskar Pandit, faujdar of that place, whom they had carried off into Nilgiri and kept there, so that no revenue had been received from him for two years. This is hardly to be reconciled with the fact that two years earlier Sheo Bhat and his cavalry had been ravaging Midnapore and Jellasore. The gleanings remaining after Sheo Bhat, for the Nilgiri zamindar to pick up, must have been scant enough. One wonders after so many years of plundering what there could have been left for any one to take. Bhawani writes again on the 27th to say, he had come to the neighbourhood of Jellasore with his troops, but as the Maharája (Janoji) had always been desirous to do "what is most beneficial for the poor inhabitants of the country" (!!) he had ordered his officers not to enter either Jellasore or Midnapore, so as to avoid any breach with the English. All this while Sheo Bhat was still in Orissa exciting the zamindars and paiks to resist the new Governor Bhawani Pandit. The Rája of Kanika whose territories lay partly in Balasore and partly in Cuttack was notorious for the disturbances he kept up. He and his paiks were conspicuous then, and as we shall see for forty years after, for their oppression and general unruliness.

The Court of Directors in 1764 express their great pleasure at learning that the proposed expedition against the Marathas in Balasore and Cuttack had been given up as "conquests are not our aim." They little foresaw what an amount of conquests would soon be forced on them by circumstances!

The Marathas were now, however, on good terms with the English, and in February 1764 there was a good deal of correspondence. Three residents were appointed, Mr. Marriott at Balasore, Mr. Hope at Cuttack, and Mr. Moore at Malood; their chief business was to keep open the communication between Calcutta and Madras, and on one occasion mention is made of sending letters by this route to Bombay, a project frequently revived in subsequent times. A letter was also written to "Bauskir Pandit, Fauzdar of Ballasore" (probably the Bháskar Pandit mentioned above) requesting him to assist Mr. Marriott who was to live at the Company's Factory; and another curious letter to "Chumina Sen, Chief at Cuttack" requests him to give strict orders to the zamindars to

provide "oil and mushauls, tom-toms and pike-men &c. according to custom." The tom-toms were to be beaten to frighten away tigers which infested the jungles through which the road passed, a significant hint as to the desolate state of the country in those days.

At the end of this year, however, we again hear from Midnapore and Balasore of threatening bodies of Maratha horse on the Balasore frontier, to check whom it was thought advisable to despatch a small force under Major Champion to garrison Midnapore. Janoji appears about this time to have sent a force of 5,000 cavalry to take possession of Midnapore.

We now come to the acquisition by the Company of the Dewany. The Directors in 1767 agree to pay to the Marathas all arrears of chauth on condition of the cession of Orissa, and negotiations were in consequence opened with Janoji to this end. A wakil, one Udaipuri Gosain, was appointed by Janoji to treat with the Bengal Council, and the amount was fixed at 13 lakhs of rupees. The wakil, however, pretended that he had no authority to deliver up the province to the English, and there the matter seems to have rested for the time being.

From this point there is little more to record of general history. The internal history of Balasore for the next thirty-four years is also nearly a blank. The Maratha Governors were as follows as far as can be ascertained:

Sheo Bhat Santra ... ..	A. D. 1756
Chimna Sahu and Udaipuri Gosain ... ..	,, 1764
Bhawani Pandit ... ..	,, 1764
(Sheo Bhat in rebellion in Kanika and Kujang all this time).	
Shambhuji Ganesh ... ..	,, 1768
Babaji Naik ... ..	,, 1771
Madhaji Hari ... ..	,, 1773
Babaji Naik (restored) ... ..	,, 1775
Madhaji Hari (restored) same year ... ..	,, 1775
Rajaram Pandit ... ..	,, 1778
Sadashib Rao ... ..	,, 1782
Chimnaji Bala... ..	uncertain.

Of the local Faujdars in the Balasore district tradition has preserved some scattered reminiscences. Bhaskar Pandit was Faujdar about 1760, and is mentioned as we have seen in the English records. The story of his having been carried off into Nilgiri by the Rájá has been noticed above. From him is probably named the village of Bháskarganj opposite to the Mission premises at Balasore.



Lala Kishor Rai is also mentioned as Faujdar, but his date is not certain. He is said to have founded the Lala Bazar near Bárabáti in the town; and to have built a Báradari or twelve-doored palace near that place.

After him came Raghunath Sárang whose name is connected with the village of Raghunathpur, eighteen miles east of Cuttack; he was succeeded by Motiram whose administration lasted for a long time, some say, for fifteen years, but this is improbable as the Marathas were constantly changing their officials, and few, even of the higher grades, held office for more than four or five years. In his time an expedition was sent against Bairagi Bhanj, Rája of Moharbhanj who had withheld his peshkash. This expedition returned victorious and brought with it, besides the captive Rája, two idols of Hanuman and Lachminarayan which are still worshipped in temples in the town.

The last Maratha Faujdar of Balasore was Mayúra Pandit, commonly called Moro Pant who lived on the site where the Jagannáth temple in Balasore now stands. He appears to have been a rapacious tyrant, and there are several allusions to him in Captain Morgan's early letters. When defeated by the English, he retired to Cuttack plundering the ryots as he went, and in the following year we find the revenue authorities allowing remissions on account of rents forcibly collected in advance on his retreat by Moro Pant. Oddly enough he is stated in the correspondence to be still residing in Cuttack, and it is suggested that he be brought to account for his spoliations, but the wise policy of passing a sponge over all transactions of the former Government, which prevailed at that time probably saved him, as we do not read of his being questioned.

To close the account of the Maratha period, I here bring together various facts or traditions which I have collected from natives of the district. The town of Balasore in those days consisted principally of the bazars which had grown up round the English and Dutch settlements, and of the suburbs lying along the river, then as now, chiefly inhabited by Muhammadans, as Kasba, Muhamadpur, Nurpur &c. Motiganj, now the centre of the town, and the principal market-place was founded by Motiram, probably about 1785—1790. The rest is described as a plain covered with jungle and scrub. The road to Jagannáth ran through the town past the Gargaria tank to Phulwar Ghát and must have been from the nature of the country almost impassable for six months of the year.

Rents were paid chiefly in cowries, and all collections were remitted to Cuttack once in three months, including the peshkash from Morbhanj and Nilgiri. The peshkash of Amboh, Keonjhar, Sokinda, Chidra and other mehals near the Baitarani appears to have been paid through the Faujdar of Bhadrakh. Old men still remember to have heard

their fathers tell of the terrible punishments inflicted by the Maratha rulers. All cases were tried verbally, no record of any kind being kept, and culprits were sentenced to be tied to the heels of a horse which was then flogged through the streets. Others were bound, smeared with sugar and exposed to the ants and other insects. Others again had their fingers tied together and wedges of iron inserted between them.

The trade of the port was even then considerable. Madras ships came for rice and paddy, and the Laccadive and Maldivé islanders then as now visited the port. It was from these latter that the cowries, so much used as currency, were obtained.

A seer of rice was sold for 15 gandas or about 70 seers to the rupee. (It was 65 seers in 1805, and now in favourable seasons sells at 30 or 32.) Opium cost a *pan* of cowries per masha, salt 14 karás per seer. The advantages of low prices were, however, much counterbalanced by the capricious exactions of the rulers. Although they seem to have had the sense not to drive away the trade by oppressing foreigners, yet upon the natives of the province itself they had no mercy. It was dangerous to be rich, or at least to display any amount of wealth, lest the attention of the Marathas should be called to the fact, and plunder and extortion follow as a matter of course. It is not surprising therefore that when the English appeared on the scene, the Marathas were left to fight their own battles, quite unsupported by the people. Indeed, they seem to have been so conscious of their unpopularity as never to have attempted to enlist the sympathies of the Oriyas on their behalf. Had they done so, the turbulent Rájás of the hills and the sea-coast might have given us a great deal of trouble and enabled the Marathas to hold out for some time.

*The English Period. The English as traders.*

To Balasore belongs the honour of containing the first settlement made by our countrymen in any part of the Bengal Presidency. By a firman, dated February 2nd, 1634 the Emperor Shah Jahan granted them permission to establish a factory at Pipli on the Subanrekha.\* They were prohibited from settling on the Ganges or any of its branches, in consequence of the disturbances caused by the Portuguese in the Sundarbans and other places shortly before. In 1640 through the intervention of Mr. Boughton, a Surgeon who had obtained great influence over several members of the Royal Family by curing them of various diseases, the English obtained permission to establish factories at Balasore and Hughli. In consequence of this permission they applied to the Nawab who granted them 12 bátis (a báti is 20 bighas) of land near the village of Balasore which was then rising into some importance as a port. The settlement

\* Stewart's History of Bengal, page 244.

was called *Bárabáti* (*i. e.* twelve *bátis*) from its extent, and is at present the principal quarter of the modern town of Balasore, and the residence of the wealthiest merchants.

It is not exactly known when the Dutch first came to Orissa, their settlement at Balasore, however, is less advantageously situated than that of the English. The latter commands the river and a convenient careening creek, and has also better means of access to the native town, while the Dutch Settlement, still called “*Hollandais Sahi*”, is behind that of the English and cut off from the river and the town by *Barabati*. I conclude therefore that the English came here first, as if the Dutch had been first in the field, it is not likely that they would have taken the worse site of the two. We do not find any mention of them before 1664 when they had a dispute with the English about their mutual boundaries, which was settled by the Nawab *Shaista Khán*. The boundaries are, however, very vague and refer to certain trees, roads and ditches which are of course not now in existence. The present boundary is very irregular and overlaps the land of *Barobati* in several places.

From the *Cuttack* records it appears that they acquired a plot of land at Balasore from the Nawab *Mataqid Khán*; this officer was *naib* for *Sháh Shuja* son of the Emperor *Sháh Jahan* and was appointed in A. H. 1055 = A. D. 1645. (*Padshahnamah*, II, 473.) This would make them at least 5 years later than the English, even if we suppose them to have got the grant in the very beginning of *Mataqid's* tenure of office.\*

The Danish Settlement, now called “*Danemár Dinga*” is worse situated than the Dutch, being further up the creek and further from the town, and it is stated by *Stewart* that they and the French did not arrive in Balasore till 1676. There is a Dutch tomb still standing in the compound of the old factory, on which is the following inscription:

“*Michael Jans Burggraaf van Sevenhuisen obiit [ ] Novemb. 1696.*”

The day of the month has unfortunately been broken off in the cyclone of July 1871 by a tree falling against it. *Stirling* is in error in saying (*Orissa*, page 30) that this tomb is dated 1660. It is a huge triangular obelisk of brick plastered, about 50 feet high, and the inscription is so high up that a mistake might easily be made in copying it from the ground. To make sure I climbed a mango tree standing close in front and copied it from a distance of a few inches only. The oldest tomb in the English cemetery at *Bárabáti* is dated 1684 and the inscription runs thus—

$$16 \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{coat} \\ \text{of} \\ \text{arms} \end{array} \right\} 84$$

\* It is probably from this governor that the *Parganahs* of *Matkatabad* and *Matkatnagar* take their names.

Here lyeth the body of Ann late wife of Captain Francis Wishaw who died ye pmo. 9 ber aged 26 years.

Also the body of Edward his son who deceased the 27th of the same month aged 4 years Anno Dni. 1684.

There were minor settlements at Soroh and Bhadrakh, and the chief article of trade was that in "Sanahs" a peculiar kind of fine cloth which is still occasionally brought for sale to Balasore. This will explain the frequent allusions to the weavers in the early records.

Balramgarhi is situated at the mouth of the Balasore river, and was formerly a large and flourishing place. The native village was washed away in the storm of 1831 and since then the place has been desolate. The old house, however, has lately been repaired and is inhabited.

We have only scattered notices of Balasore from time to time in the various histories. These I proceed to put together into as continuous a narrative as possible, aided by the few vague local traditions which still remain.

In 1685 Balasore was near being abandoned by the English altogether. Shaista Khán the Nawab of Bengal was accused by them, of oppressing their servants and injuring their trade. Apparently the English were not free from blame themselves. However, as usual they carried matters with a high hand, and the Company at home with permission of James II sent out a fleet of 10 ships under Admiral Nicholson with orders to proceed first to Balasore, and remove the Company's servants and break up the factory. He was then to go to Chittagong, fortify it and make it a base of operations and asylum for the English, from which to commence the war, by first attacking Dacca and gradually over-running Bengal.\* Nicholson's fleet, however, met with bad weather and eventually arrived at Hughli, and a war ensued which was not brought to a close till 1687; a peace was made in that year but did not last many months. The Company annoyed at the failure of Nicholson's expedition, sent a second under Captain Heath, whose first proceeding was to carry off Mr. Charnock and the Company's servants from "Chuttanutty" (now Calcutta) and taking them on board his ships sail for Balasore. The Governor of that place, whose name is not mentioned, offered to treat with him, but as Heath would not consent to do so, the Governor seized the Company's two factors and imprisoned them. "Heath landed with a party of soldiers and seamen on the 29th November 1688 attacked and took a redoubt of 30 guns and plundered the town of Balasore."† The

\* Stewart, p. 312.

† Stewart, p. 321.

fort could only have been at Muhamadnagar near the present Customs Wharf, as there is no other place near the town where a fort could have been of any use. At that place there are still some curious mounds and ridges which closely resemble fortifications, and the position is one which would command the approach to the town by water as well as the shipping in the port. The two unfortunate factors were sent into the interior and never heard of again. After this senseless and purposeless outrage, Captain Heath sailed away to Chittagong, and the native governor very naturally demolished the Company's factory.

Balasure now remained unoccupied by the English till 1691, when a firman was granted by Aurangzeb for the re-establishment of the factories in Bengal. Mrs. Wishaw's tombstone mentioned above has a great hole in it, which looks as if it had been torn up from its original position and probably thrown away, till restored on the re-occupation of the factory by our countrymen. It is the only tombstone of so early a date. The next is to the memory of Mrs. Kelsall, wife of the factor already mentioned, and is dated 1751. Calcutta was not founded till 1690 and it is curious that we hear nothing of Pipli in all these events. It would seem that Balasure had become the more important place of the two.

Nothing more is known of the condition or circumstances of Balasure Factory till 1748. It is said by some writers that on the capture of Calcutta by Surajuddaulah in 1756 the English fugitives took refuge at Balramgarhi. I find no mention of this in the Records, and it would on the contrary appear that Drake and his garrison were on board their ships at Fulda till the arrival of Clive. In 1763 the French fleet was cruising in Balasure roads and captured some English ships (Long, p. 295), which caused a great panic in Calcutta. Two years previous to this, the following curious and interesting entry is to be found in the Government records (Long, p. 250.) "From Latful Neheman (? Rahman) Thanadar of Balasure, January 1761. Some time ago the merchants were wont to send iron, stone-plates, rice and other things from hence to Calcutta, and they brought tobacco and other things from thence to sell here, and therefore the merchants reaped a profit on both. Two years ago Mr. Burdett came here and Jaggernauth was his Mutsooddy and brought a sloop for his own use and intercepted the trade from Balasure to Calcutta. The merchants were so much distressed that they relinquished trade, and many of them left the place and transacted their business at Kunka, where they remain and those that are here are greatly distressed and are always making complaints. I have represented it to him but he will not listen to it. He has left the factory and embarked on board a sloop, and has intercepted the merchant boats and will not permit them to pass."

It will be observed that the trade in stone-plates and rice constituted then as now, the principal export of Balasore.

The only other notice of this period is a petty squabble in 1766 with the Dutch about a rope walk which was made by the English on land claimed by the Dutch. The land was given up by the former.

*Commencement of English rule.*

When the war broke out with the Marathas, as a part of the general operations, it was resolved to drive them out of Orissa, and while General Wellesley attacked them from the south, and General Lake from the north, and were victorious respectively in the celebrated battles of Assaye and Laswaree, the 1st Madras Fusileers, with two native Madras Regiments all under Lieutenant-Colonel George Harcourt marched from Ganjam and took the town of Cuttack on the 10th October 1803.

At the same time a detachment of troops, European and native, about 1000 strong under Captain Morgan, and Lieutenant Broughton sailed for Balasore. I cannot find where they came from, but it was most probably from Calcutta, as the native troops belonged to the Bengal army and a detachment of the same troops was sent under Col. Fergusson\* to Jellasore to protect the Bengal Frontier. They arrived in three ships, and landed at Jampada near Gabgaon a village adjoining old Balasore on the east, and about three miles below the present town. They were in want of provisions, which were supplied to them by Prahlad Nayak, zamindar of old Balasore. They then advanced along the bank of the river, and owing probably to the difficult nature of the ground, were not opposed by the Marathas till they got close to Balighat just below Bárabáti. Here a band of horsemen bore down on them, and in the skirmish which ensued, one European soldier was killed. The English then rushed forward and attacked the Maratha fort, which stood on the the site of the salt gola, and soon took possession of it. The Marathas appear to have made but a faint resistance, and quickly disappeared. Immediately after this, a drum was beaten in all the bazars announcing that the English had taken possession of the province and would protect all who behaved themselves peaceably.

Finding the old factory in ruins Captain Morgan took up his quarters in a new house built by Mr. Wilkinson the last resident and at once set to work to pacify the district and restore order. The date of the capture of Balasore is 21st September 1803.†

\* They were the 1st batt. 5th Bengal N. I. and 2nd batt. 7th N. I.—(Balasore Collectorate records 1804).

† (Morgan to Post Master General 26-9-1804 and Grant Duff History of Marathas.)

The news of this success reached Colonel Harcourt before he arrived at Cuttack. The earliest letter in the records of the Balasore Collectorate is one from Colonel Harcourt to Captain Morgan congratulating him. I give it a portion of it.

“ In Camp at Burpoorshuttumpore, 25 miles south of Cuttack, 3rd October 1803.

“ SIR,

“ I have great satisfaction in acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 22nd ultimo and am happy to hear of your successes in Balasore.

\*

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\*

\*

“ I have &c.

“ G. HARCOURT,

“ *Lieutenant Colonel.*

“ *Coming in Cuttack.*”

This shews that Morgan had taken Balasore before the British force had even reached Cuttack.

Captain Morgan, who appears to have been a rough and ready, but able officer, pushed on a small detachment and occupied Soroh, which for some reason he miscalls Soorung, on the 3rd October. The first book of copies of letters sent is unfortunately not to be found, and the earliest letter of Captain Morgan's is dated 12th June 1804, but from a large collection of letters in Colonel Harcourt's own hand still in the office, his and Morgan's movements may be clearly traced.

Their first efforts were to learn the geography of the Moharbhanj and Nilgiri Hills, especially the passes, and to open communications with the Rajas of those two States. Spies were sent into “ Mohurbundge and Lilliagerhy” as Harcourt writes them, to keep a watch on the chiefs, and Passports were to be granted to their vakeels or representatives should they desire to visit Cuttack.

Soroh was abandoned and the detachment under Lieutenant Slye marched to Jajpore in November. Morgan was at once entrusted with Revenue duties, in that month he is instructed to make it known that “ as it is the intention of the Commissioners for the settlement of the Province of Cuttack to give a general acquittal of all arrears of Revenue due to the Sircar, previous to the arrival of the British Troops in the Province, we mean on the other hand not to attend to any complaints which the zamindars, kandytes, mokuddums or ryots may wish to prefer against their former masters” (Colonel Harcourt to Morgan 3-11-1803.) The Moharbhanj Ráni was at this time apparently half afraid to come in, and half disposed to be turbulent. Harcourt writes frequent letters to him, and enjoins on Morgan the necessity of extremely conciliatory conduct to him. A certain Mr. Possman appears to have been up in Moharbhanj

meddling, he is warned that if he does not return at once to Balasore "immediate steps will be taken against him." Moharbhanj, however, does not appear to have quieted down, and two Companies of Infantry one from Balasore and one from Jellasore were sent to Hariharpur (spelt Hurispore and Huriorpoor) "to promote the peace and tranquillity of the Mohurbundge district." Further instructions are to the effect following :

"Having cause to believe that the Rani of Mohurbundge and her adopted son Te-koit\* are both desirous of the protection of the British Government being extended to them you will direct the officer proceeding to Huriorpore in command of a detachment, to conduct himself towards the Rannee and Te-koit, or their vakeels with every mark of friendly attention. He may open any necessary communication with them, but you will be pleased to enjoin him to avoid committing himself by any promises or agreements that may be constructed by them as binding on the British Authorities in Cuttack." (Harcourt, 16-11-1803.)

Cuttack now begins to be noticeable as it is at frequent intervals throughout the early years of British rule as a place in constant want of supplies and always on the verge of famine. On 1st December 1803 an urgent call is made for fifteen thousand maunds of rice from Balasore. Again on the 1st June 1804 Captain Morgan is ordered to warn all pilgrims of the great scarcity of rice and cowries at Cuttack, and to endeavour to induce them to supply themselves with provisions before entering the province.

On the 1st September 1804 a third call is made on Balasore for 20,000 maunds of rice which were accordingly despatched in boats from Dhamra and Churaman. A long correspondence follows in the course of which occurs an important letter of Captain Morgan's, dated 27th September and marked "Private" in which he explains the cause of the continual scarcity at Cuttack.

He begins by pointing out that twenty miles north of the Mahanadi there was no scarcity at all, that Balasore had rice in store enough for three year's consumption, and it was selling at 65 seers (of 80 tolas) for the rupee: there were immense stocks at Dhamra and Churaman intended for export to Madras, and consequently he concludes that the scarcity of rice at Cuttack is not natural, but must have been artificially produced. In examining the causes for this state of things he arrives at the following conclusions:

1. The large number of Marathas still resident at Cuttack are bitterly hostile to the English and do their best to stop the import of rice in

\* Te-Koit is Tikáit one bearing the tíká (tilaka) or mark of sovereignty, and is the usual title of the heir-apparent to a throne.



the hope of starving us out. They have ceased to import from Sambhalpore as they used to, for the same reason, and having long had relations with the ryots many of whom still hold their advances for grain unliquidated they are able to prevent them from bringing in grain to Cuttack.

2. The ryots have hitherto always been accustomed to give up nothing until they were compelled. The Marathas took what they wanted by force, and the ryots did not understand our mild method of asking for and paying for what we wanted, they took it for weakness, and were so elated at their release from oppression, that they thought themselves quite independent and would do nothing to oblige any one.

3. The Amils were in league against us, as they had for a long time taken advantage of their position to hold the lion's share of the profitable export trade to Madras, and did not wish to sell in Cuttack.

4. The Commissariat officers were shamefully inert and incompetent, and notwithstanding all the above drawbacks could, if they would only exert themselves, collect a much larger supply than they did. Colonel Harcourt appears to have taken some effective steps to remedy this state of things, for no further rice was required from Balasore during the rest of 1804 or in 1805.

Raja Tripati Raj was at this time sent from Cuttack to Balasore to act as Amil or Collector of the Revenue, and was put under Captain Morgan's orders; and Amils were appointed at Soroh, Bhadrakh and Dolgram, who also were directed to send in their accounts to that officer. They all appear to have been thoroughly untrustworthy; making use of every conceivable pretext to avoid doing what was required of them, and carrying that exasperating policy of passive resistance at which the Oriyas are such adepts to the highest pitch. The correspondence teems with complaints against them. They would not collect the revenue punctually, they never knew anything that they were asked about, they could not be found when wanted, denied having received this or that order, sent in their accounts imperfectly drawn up, long after time, and sometimes not at all, and on the whole behaved as badly as any set of men in their position well could. This indeed appears to have been the general tone of every one in the Province. Well aware of our ignorance of the country, they all with one accord abstained from helping us in any way, no open resistance was ventured upon, but all stolidly sat aloof—papers were hidden, information withheld, boats, bullocks and carts sent out of the way, the zamindars who were ordered to go into Cuttack to settle for their estates did not go, and on searching for them at their homes could not be found, were reported as absent, on a journey, no one knew where. But if from ignorance the English officers committed any mistake, then life suddenly returned to the dull inert mass, and complaints were loud and incessant.

The Amil of Bhadrakh was one Mohan Lal, the name of the Amil of Soroh is not given, and during this year it would seem that Soroh and Balasore were incorporated into one Amilship under Tripati Raj.

From the circumstance of our not having Captain Morgan's letters of this period, I am unable to give more than a fragmentary history of the transactions that took place. Notices from time to time occur of parties of Marathas having been seen or heard of here and there, and there is a great search to find the "Ongole or Ungool Pass"; nobody seems to have known where it was.

Sambhalpur capitulated to Major Broughton on the 12th January 1804, and all further fear from the Marathas was thus at an end. On the 9th of the same month came also the news of a peace having been concluded with the Raja of Berar.

The light thrown upon the events of the following sixty-eight years by the tolerably complete series of English letters in the Balasore office will be duly made use of in the succeeding chapters, but I conceive it unnecessary to do more in this chapter than to record the few events of importance that have occurred in the period in question. Captain Morgan remained at Balasore till 19th November 1804 when he made over charge to Mr. Ker, Collector and Magistrate, Northern Division of Cuttack. During his tenure of office he had been first simply "Commanding at Balasore" but during 1804 he had gradually grown into Collector, Magistrate, Salt and Customs Agent and general factotum.

Mr. Ker made the first settlement, which was very summary and simple. It included all the country now lying within the Jajpore Sub-division of Cuttack, and the statements referring to it are, in part at least, still extant. To the north this settlement did not go beyond Bastah, as Jellasore was under Midnapore, and the country east of that place came under a separate arrangement. This tract of country between Jellasore and the sea was called the "Mahratta Mehals" and consisted of the Parganas of Pattaspur, Kamardachaur and Bhograi, together with the smaller mehals of Shahbandar, Napochaur and Kismat Katsahi.

There is one volume of letters sent and one of letters received for the year of Mr. Ker's incumbency 1804-5 but they contain very little of historical importance. In the early part of the year the Raja of Kani-ka, always a turbulent and refractory person, made an attack with, it is said, 600 armed paiks on the outpost of "Rigagurh," the place where his principal fort and residence was situated, on the lower Brahmini just above the point where it unites with the Baitarni, which was held by a native officer and a few sepoy. Captain McCarthy in command of the Honorable Company's brig "Scourge" who was at the time lying off Dhamrah sent an express to the Commissioners of Cuttack, who deputed a force of 400

paiks to keep order. The Rájá and his family were seized and taken to Balasore where they were suitably lodged in a house prepared for them, and guarded by barkandazes. Kanika was brought under the management of Mr. Ker (Secretary to Commissioners 27-2-05 McCarthy to Commissioners 3-3-05.)

In this year also the question was raised of the expediency of removing the Calcutta Road into British Territory. It previously passed through the Mobarbhanj and Nilgiri States, and the Rájás of those places under pretence of securing the safety of travellers, were in the habit of levying heavy and vexatious tolls at certain ghats or passes on the road. As they demurred about relinquishing this source of revenue, the road was removed and carried through Rajghat and Bastah to Balasore. The old road was very soon deserted by travellers as the new route through British Territory was found to be much safer and cheaper.

Major Morgan was allowed a salary of 500 Rs. a month for the period he had been in charge of Balasore (Accountant 30-9-05). The Amils who were in charge of Balasore, Soroh and Bhadrakh appear still to have been very troublesome; the correspondence of 1804 and 1805 is full of complaints of their remissness and refusal to obey orders.

Having completed his settlement Mr. Ker on the 29th August 1805 made over charge of his office to Mr. G. Webb who was appointed Collector of all Orissa, or as they persisted in calling it, the zillah of Cuttack. From this date down to 1815 there was no resident British officer in Balasore, or in fact anywhere north of the Mahanadi, and as the Collector lived at Puri in the extreme south of the province, his hold over the zamindars of the north could have been little more than nominal.

It is perhaps to the relaxation of control for many years in Balasore that we may attribute that special characteristic of the inhabitants of the district which leads them to carry on their affairs without any reference whatever to the law or to the officials of the Government. They never take the trouble to enquire what the law is on any point, but if a question arises, settle it in any way that may seem best to them. To the same cause may be ascribed the excessive prevalence of the practice of levying illegal cesses, the existence of many kinds of singular and pernicious customs, and the general muddle of conflicting interests observable in connection with landed property.

As the early years of our rule in Orissa were fertile in changes, and worked a complete revolution in the position of the classes connected with the land, it would have been interesting to trace the progress of our laws and rules and their effect upon the province. I am, however, precluded from doing this by the fact that from 1806 to 1828 there was no

[The abrupt conclusion of the foregoing article is due to the most unfortunate loss of the concluding pages of Mr. Beames' Manuscript while it was passing through the press. This mischance is the more to be regretted, as the lost MS. was the only copy in the author's possession; which precludes any restoration of the concluding portion. Fortunately the lost portion was very small; and the article is practically complete, and contains everything of interest and value.—ED.]